



ISABELLE FARRINGTON COLLEGE  
OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  

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Sacred Heart University

Michael P. Alfano, Ph.D.  
Dean of the College

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Dear Senator McCrory, Representative Sanchez and Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Michael Alfano. I am the vice provost for strategic partnerships and dean of the Isabelle Farrington College of Education and Human Development at Sacred Heart University. I also served as chair of the edTPA Working Group that was established by the Connecticut General Assembly pursuant to Pursuant to Public Act No. 19-139, *An Act Concerning Education Issues*, Sec. 3.

I offer this testimony in direct opposition to HB 5286: *An Act Concerning the Development of a New Preservice Assessment for Teacher Preparation Programs*. The proposed legislation, as outlined in HB 5286, is problematic for the following reasons:

1. CAEP national accreditation standards, which are required for program approval in Connecticut, require that Educator Preparation Programs (i.e., EPPs) utilize statistically valid and reliable preservice assessments for teacher preparation programs. The assessment currently utilized in CT, the edTPA, is acknowledged as valid and reliable by numerous psychometricians and, more importantly by CAEP, therefore meeting accreditation and CT program approval requirements.
2. HB 5286 will mandate that Connecticut's state EPPs, under the direction of the University of Connecticut, to develop and validate a preservice assessment. This is an extremely expensive process that will take years to accomplish. As noted as far back as the EPAC process in 2015, Connecticut state institutions simply do not have the financial and human resources required to develop their own valid and reliable performance assessments. As such, HB 5286 is, essentially, an unfunded mandate.
3. Many aspiring educators who attend universities in CT will graduate and teach in other states that require the edTPA for initial teacher licensure. Individual EPPs should have the option to continue to use the tool to meet the needs of their graduates who intend to teach outside of CT.
4. In CT, the overall financial cost to an aspiring educator regarding the completion of the required teacher licensure test regimen is problematic. Connecticut is, by far, the most expensive state in the region to become a licensed educator. It has been said numerous times to the Education Committee over numerous legislative sessions. And it bears repeating here again, in the context of HB 5286: The specific fee associated with edTPA



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is not the problem. The problem is the structure of the overall teacher licensure-related testing regimen required in CT.

Recommendations

1. To truly understand the cost involved in creating a CT-specific preservice performance assessment, establish a task force, to include membership that is inclusive of the entire teacher preparation community in CT, not just state institutions.
2. Continue to allow EPPs who so choose to continue to utilize the edTPA as a valid, reliable, and national accreditation appropriate preservice performance assessment, regardless of the outcome of HB 5286 or its predecessors.
3. The Education Committee has the authority to investigate and champion positive change regarding the overall teacher licensure testing regimen in Connecticut. I would urge you to finally do so in lieu of abandoning state-wide implementation of edTPA in Connecticut. The edTPA is the only assessment currently in CT statute that reliably and validly measures a new teacher's fitness to teach, day one.

Respectfully submitted,

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